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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000061

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STATE FOR ISN/CB, VCI/CCA, L/NPV, IO/MPR,
SECDEF FOR OSD/GSA/CN,CP>
JOINT STAFF FOR DD PMA-A FOR WTC
COMMERCE FOR BIS (BROWN, DENYER AND CRISTOFARO)
NSC FOR LUTES
WINPAC FOR WALTER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/29/2020

TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [OPCW](#) [CWC](#)

SUBJECT: CWC: MEETING WITH THE OPCW DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON
IRAQ AND OTHER ISSUES

REF: A. THE HAGUE 51

[1](#)B. THE HAGUE 39

[1](#)C. THE HAGUE 10

[1](#)D. 09 THE HAGUE 738

Classified By: Janet E. Beik for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

This is CWC-07-10

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) At the request of OPCW Director-General (DG) Pfirter, Delreps Beik and Granger met with him and Chief of Staff Ekwall on January 28 to discuss Iraq. The Iraqi Ambassador had asked the DG to encourage assistance from the United States and other countries for Iraq's chemical weapons (CW) destruction. Additional topics discussed at the meeting included recent consultations on the final destruction deadline and "situations not foreseen" by the Convention, and plans for the next Executive Council (EC) in February (EC-59).

WHEN IS THE NEW AMBASSADOR ARRIVING?

[1](#)2. (SBU) After initial pleasantries, Director-General Pfirter again enquired when the new U.S. Ambassador/Permanent Representative would be arriving, noting that the position has now been vacant for more than a year. Delrep responded that a formal nomination has not yet been made. In the run-up to 2012, Pfirter stressed the pressing need for good diplomatic management of the chemical weapons destruction issue, including high-level representation in The Hague. He noted the perception that not replacing the U.S. Ambassador reflects on the relative importance the U.S. attaches to OPCW issues, including chemical weapons destruction. (DEL COMMENT: With rumors running rife about who the next U.S. Ambassador to the OPCW will be, Delreps are constantly being asked by other delegations and the Technical Secretariat

about the nomination and dates. We agree with the DG's point about perceptions. END COMMENT.)

IRAQ

13. (C) Turning to his request for meeting on Iraq, the DG said that, while it was not precisely in his mandate to deliver a "demarche" from the Iraqi Ambassador, he had been asked to encourage the U.S. and other countries to provide assistance for Iraq's destruction of its chemical weapons remnants, including the "toxic waste" that appears to be all that is left in Bunker 41. Delrep responded that it was clear in the technical meetings two weeks ago (Ref B) that Iraq wanted guaranteed assistance before agreeing to amend their initial declaration and develop a destruction plan; however, donors would need to see the plan before they could coordinate assistance and expertise. She noted that Iraq appears to expect the U.S. to substantially fund the destruction program, but said that would be highly unlikely, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Andrew Weber informed the Iraqi delegation in December (Ref D). Delrep said the U.S. would look into how we might be able to support Iraq's destruction, perhaps providing engineering expertise to develop an encapsulation plan, but we would certainly not be in a position to write a blank check.

14. (C) Delrep briefed the DG on the assistance meeting with the Iraqi delegation and some potential donors that took place on the margins of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) in December (Ref D), and noted the participation of CSP Chairman Verba (Lithuania) in that meeting. Verba would like an active role for his year as Chairman, and, if he is willing to chair an informal Iraq donors group, it could be very useful. Pfirter appeared unaware of the assistance meeting and said he would be meeting Verba later in the week and would discuss chairing ongoing Iraq donors meetings.

15. (C) Pfirter said that he had been warned by the UN Secretary General's Representative in Iraq that security conditions, and the strain on security resources during the run-up to elections in March, would not permit an OPCW visit to Iraq until after the elections. He said unfortunately, there is not much he can report to the Executive Council on progress in Iraq, and some delegations will raise questions on the delays. Delrep noted that the Iraqi team for the technical meetings had not included Dr. Al Sharaa, and Ambassador Banaa had not attended any of the sessions. She expressed doubt about the accuracy of reporting back to Baghdad and when a decision from the Iraqi government would be forthcoming on whether Iraq would agree to amend its initial declaration in light of the new information from UN documents, or whether it would approve pursuing the option of encapsulating the bunkers. The next step is Iraq's to take. Pfirter agreed that there have always been difficulties in communication between The Hague and Baghdad, and said he would be meeting again with the Iraqi Ambassador. (DEL NOTE: We have also requested a meeting with Ambassador Banaa. END NOTE.)

CURRENT CONSULTATIONS

16. (SBU) Turning to the "situations not foreseen" consultation held the day before, the DG inquired

how it went. Delrep spoke briefly about U.S. reservations with the facilitator's draft guidelines, and noted other delegations' confusion about the exercise and questions on the draft text. This consultation would take time, she concluded.

¶7. (SBU) Pfirter agreed with Delrep that EC Chairman Lomonaco's consultation the week before on the final destruction deadline had gone well, noting the constructive attitude of nearly all delegations. He said even Iran's intervention had been restrained. The DG also singled out South Africa and Germany for their good interventions. Reiterating his previous comments about a legal opinion on missing the 2012 deadline (Ref A), Pfirter stressed that the time is not yet right and that the request for an opinion must be a concrete question agreed by consensus. Delrep conveyed U.S. views on amending the Convention and seeking a technical change; the DG agreed that an amendment would be unwise and only open "Pandora's box."

EC-59

¶8. (SBU) Following the consultation on 2012, the DG advised Lomonaco to present his report to the Council in February (EC-59) under the current QCouncil in February (EC-59) under the current agenda sub-item on progress made in meeting the destruction deadline and other destruction-related issues. Despite some delegations wanting a

separate item to discuss the EC Chairman's consultation, Pfirter said he had resisted, thinking it best to avoid creating an additional opportunity for some delegations to rail against U.S. projections of not completing destruction by the 2012 deadline.

¶9. (SBU) On administrative issues before EC-59, Pfirter said that he will issue a paper regarding the composition of Technical Secretariat (TS) staff in response to calls from the African Group -- particularly South Africa. The DG wants any reporting on staff composition to be mandated by an Executive Council decision, just as similar reports in the UN are made in response to UN General Assembly resolutions. Pfirter noted that Pakistani Ambassador Chaudry had facilitated the issue at the UN when he was previously posted to New York, and Pfirter has asked Chaudry to chair discussion of the issue at the OPCW before EC-60 in April.

¶10. (SBU) The DG also said that he has prepared a draft decision lowering the maximum number of annual leave days which staff can cash in at the end of their contracts from 60 to 30 in response to a recommendation by the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (ABAF). However, Pfirter feels that the change actually will cost the Organization more, and he will recommend deferral of the decision until after the next ABAF meeting (scheduled for May) so that ABAF can examine a related report on the indirect costs of the proposed policy change.

¶11. (U) BEIK SENDS.

LEVIN